DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 109 471 CE 004 328

TITLE	Home Economist Image Study: A Qualitative Investigation.
INSTITUTION	Yankelovich (Daniel), Inc., New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY	American Home Economics Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	May 74
NOTE	43p.
AVAILABLE FROM	American Home Economics Association, 2010 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 ($2.00)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 PLUS POSTAGE. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Attitudes; *Home Economics; Professional Recognition; *Public Relations; *Role Perception; Status; Surveys

ABSTRACT

The study was made in order to provide background for a planned public relations program sponsored by the American Home Economics Association (AHEA). A total of 26 personal and 79 telephone interviews were conducted of persons in business, education, communications and media, and government. The study found that: there is need for a public relations program; such a program needs to be direct, must have a consistent focus, and must emphasize professionalism; home economics must establish an identity and build an image; many potential employers are unclear about the home economists' skills but would like to learn more; and the AHEA is the appropriate organization through which to present a public relations program. The more detailed findings of the study are presented as eight hypotheses with a discussion of each and a representative sampling of interview responses. There is a listing and brief discussion of 10 other attitudes and modes of behavior toward home economics which were found in the study. (PR)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED109471

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

HOME ECONOMIST IMAGE STUDY

A QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION

Prepared for

American Home Economics Association

May, 1974

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL BY MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Olene Owens

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER

JUN 06 1975

DANIEL YANKELOVICH
INCORPORATED

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
FOREWORD AND STUDY PURPOSE.....	1
STUDY SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY.....	2
I - MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	5
II - DISCUSSION OF DETAILED STUDY FINDINGS AS QUALITATIVE HYPOTHESES.....	14
III - OTHER PRINCIPAL INSIGHTS INTO ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR SPECIFIC TO HOME ECONOMICS TODAY.....	36

FOREWORD AND STUDY PURPOSE

The qualitative study presented here was completed by Daniel Yankelovich, Inc., for the American Home Economics Association during the Spring of 1974.

The basic purpose of this research was to provide background for a planned public relations program to be sponsored by the AHEA.

It was intended that this study, to the extent that time and budget would permit, should provide data and qualitative documentation toward the establishment of effective goals for such a public relations effort. The study fulfills this goal and, in so doing, raises another series of questions in the more directly substantive areas to which home economics devotes itself. The Association, we believe will have administrative interest in these findings as well.

This report presents the following sections after a brief methodology:

I - Management Summary of Findings and Recommendations

II - Discussion of Detailed Study Findings as Qualitative Hypotheses

III - Other Principal Insights Into Attitudes and Behavior Specific to Home Economics Today.

STUDY SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

Two sequential phases of research were completed in the course of this study.

Phase 1

a. Meetings between American Home Economics Association personnel and the Daniel Yankelovich, Inc. study team were held to reach mutual agreement on the objectives of this study and the purpose for which it was being undertaken.

b. Twenty-six in-depth personal interviews were completed in Phase 1 among the following publics:

Business	6
Secondary Education	3
Universities	6
Communications	5
Government Agencies	3
State Legislators	3

The Phase 1 study findings were presented to the American Home Economics Association and a questionnaire for telephone interviewing was prepared utilizing information learned from the Phase 1 research.

Phase 2

Seventy-nine telephone interviews were completed among the following publics:

Business: 15

- Textiles/fashion
- Food manufacturers
- Appliances
- Cosmetics
- Consumer goods

Government: 25

A. Agencies: 14

- Federal
- State
- City

B. Legislators: 11

- Federal
- State

Secondary Education: 14

- State Departments of Education
- Superintendents of Schools
- School principals

College/Universities: 10

Deans of Colleges and Universities:

School of Home Economics

School of Human Ecology

School of Human Development

College of Fine and Applied Arts

Media: 15

Newspapers

Magazines

Radio

TV

Wire Service

Upon completion, all questionnaires were summarized and analyzed by the Daniel Yankelovich, Inc. study team. The findings are incorporated in this final report.

I. MANAGEMENT SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Study Conclusions and their Implications

This summary of findings provides a broad overview of the qualitative insights which this study obtained regarding home economics and home economists. There is an essential focus to these findings which has at least a twofold significance for the AHEA:

...As a platform for current decision-making regarding a public relations program.

...As initial insight into some more basic issues which appear to underlie those aspects of home economics to which a current public relations program might reasonably address itself at this point in time.

Two sections appear below, one each devoted to the conclusions of the study in each of the above areas.

Proposed Current Public Relations Program

1. There can be little question that home economics and home economists need the support of an active, well-positioned public relations program.

   Both the discipline and those who have elected to pursue it as an area of human endeavor are, we feel, being penalized in the pursuit of their goals by a failure among prospective employers to understand:

...What home economics seeks as primary goals.

...What home economists are trained and fitted to accomplish.

...Even what basic skills they can consistently offer an employer.

In addition, there exists today a confusing series of polar-opposite stereotypes of home economists which tend too often to foster avoidance behavior on the part of prospective employers or to foster spotty employment on a temporary consulting or advisory basis rather than as a career opportunity.

...On the one hand, home economists are seen as active, skilled and worthwhile contributors as employees.

...On the other hand, home economists are seen as traditional, limited and carrying an uncertainty as to the extent to which they can or will contribute to the employer's ultimate goals.

2. The above lack of identity and fractionated image thus become the target topics for a forthcoming public

relations program on the part of the American Home Economics Association and the best statement of the goal for such a program appears, on the basis of this research, to be:

...First, to establish a clear identity as to what those trained in the home economics discipline are, what they do and do not do, how and in what related areas they function most effectively.

...And second, through first establishing the identity of the home economist (for it is a prerequisite), to build a coherent image for the home economist which builds on the best of its present polar image, and in so doing, gradually destroys the negatives of that image.

3. Some of the aspects of a public relations program for home economics and home economists which this study suggests are:

...An emphasis on professionalism. Today the home economist is seen as a "do-er," a task-oriented "performer," instead of one who contributes at the level of knowledge and abstraction (and therefore broad helpfulness) which characterizes the professional approach.

...A clear and consistent <u>focus.</u> The disjointed impressions, especially among employers, which exist today vis-a-vis home economists, need to be rallied around a central theme or thread which is never lost sight of in the course of the public relations program--or after it, for the kind of confusion we find here can be tenacious.

...A need to be <u>direct</u> and <u>authoritative</u>. There are slow and patient ways to deal with a confused identity over time, but it appears to us that home economics and home economists need a significantly faster result. One of the better ways to seek to accomplish a faster resolution of confusion is through the use of a credible but authoritative posture in communications efforts.

4. One of the problems to wrestle with in the final construction and use of a communications program is the fact that various types of potential employers, under the situation as it is today, believe that they have different supplementary needs when it comes to home economists over and above whatever they may feel a home economist "really does" as a result of her disciplinary training:

...Government appears to be additionally asking for public affairs skills, knowledge of legislation and legislative tactics.

...Media appear additionally to require writing, public speaking and/or broadcast.

...Business in general, though not as precise due to its diversity, is additionally asking for marketing knowledge and skills.

It may therefore be that, for the present, there is a need for supplementary promotions to specific types of employers emphasizing, to the extent it is true, those home economist capabilities for which they, the employers, have special need. <u>But our recommendation is that this be undertaken only under a generally consistent umbrella which first seeks to establish the identity of the discipline itself.</u>

5. A very hopeful sign in terms of the acceptance of a communication program for home economics and home economists is the fact that employers, and indeed educators as well, indicate that they would appreciate more information about the field (over 70%). It is true that

they are not all specifically asking for the identity-resolving information proposed here except by indirection, but despite that, they are conveying a willingness to notice and pay attention to material about home economics which offers a running start toward the ultimate impact and effectiveness of a well-considered public relations program.

6. The study further finds no reason to believe that the American Home Economics Association is other than the best organization to present a public relations program as discussed here. While colleges and universities are most often mentioned as the referent to "seek out a home economist," the AHEA was generally more consistently mentioned than any other single source except colleges and universities. It appears fitting, therefore, to assume that there is a nucleus of persons prepared to accept the AHEA when and if it undertakes a basic public relations program.

Basic Longer Range Planning for Home Economics

A matter of considerable import which emerges from this study as a very strong hypothesis relates to the fact that home economics as a discipline is itself rather thoroughly misunderstood and polarized. Even educators appear uncertain of its goals and aims.

Some see it in the more traditional "homemaking, dietitian" role; some see it with much broader horizons. Some want to keep the discipline narrow; some want it to encompass a whole host of new topics ranging from "quality of life" to science and research methodology, classic economics, law, etc.

In this context, the perceived purposes of studying home economics are also diffuse, ranging up and down the scale from the most practical preparation for practical work (as food testing) through teaching to numerous aspects of consumer affairs, modern living and the like. This diversity of purpose appears extensive at the college level, so that it should come as no particular surprise that employers are confused, for they must in fact be encountering a whole class of potential employees who make different claims about their areas of expertise and training. (Employers faced with "liberal arts" graduates have the same problem, we believe.)

This study, therefore, leaves the distinct impression that longer range planning for home economics in terms of defining itself and its content and, therefore its graduates, is the real key to the solution of the issues which this study raises for public relations purposes.

Other disciplines offer an avenue of approach to the solution of the problem. They have frequently fostered internal specialization which in turn reflects itself in the titles used by those

seeking employment (chemical, electrical, mechanical engineer; social, experimental or clinical psychologist; internal, pediatric or chiropractic physician, etc.). Home economics certainly offers the same possibility for organizing its diversity and presenting its graduates to employers with specialty "labels" for greater ease in future employment decision-making--which really makes the point: it is seemingly not a matter of changing the content of home economics or of stereotyping its content and thus preventing growth. It is a matter of organization and systematization of that content so that people, especially employers, readily envision home economics as an umbrella designation for a class of trained professionals with varying specialties, from among whom it is not difficult to make a successful employment selection.

Recent attempts to change the name "home economics" to broader designations like "human ecology," for example, in the light of this study appear more to confound than to help. There is certainly every reason that home economics should expand its horizons and encompass more of current concern, but changing the title of the discipline when it is already unclear appears only to be compounding the confusion. The problem of presenting the interdisciplinary inclusion of ecology with home economics, for instance, is no different than that related to the creation of "atomic physics" as an area of specialization upon discovery of

the atom or, somewhat earlier, the development of "group therapy" when psychology saw the need to study group interaction as an insight into individual behavior. These decisions came from within the discipline and were successfully implemented in common parlance. Home economics, it appears, has the same opportunity.

II. DISCUSSION OF DETAILED STUDY FINDINGS AS QUALITATIVE HYPOTHESES

HYPOTHESIS #1

That home economics, as an area of study and later as a context for employment, has little or no consistent identity. Since this appears true for the discipline, it follows that home economists also have no clear identity.

...Seven out of every ten respondents said that "the home economist's major function and real role in society is relatively unknown"--and, though it may be difficult to believe, this finding appears equally true for all populations studied (educators, government and business). There is no more certain barrier to the creation and maintenance of a distinct and pervasive identity than lack of knowledge, especially at the 70 per cent level.

...The number of different functional expectations (beyond teacher and dietitian upon which there is reasonable agreement) suggested by business and government employers and potential employers, when asked to describe the types of positions for which a home economist is likely to be hired, merely adds to identity confusion, since they fit into no known pattern or configuration of occupational classes:

Test kitchen supervisor
Cooperative extension representative
Consumer representative

Utilities sales representative

Merchandise manager, stimulate store business

Government agency director

Social case worker

Interior designer

Feature editor (women's publications)

Nursery school director

Product development and testing

Quality control

Recipe development, cookbooks

Stylist (fashion shows)

Marketing research (new products) (consumer feedback)

Competitive product evaluations

Public relations, advertising

Home sewing education, sewing laboratories

Housing, furnishings

R&D, work with technical people

Answering consumer household questions

Explain, describe and extend use of products

Provide scientific approach to family problems

Provide public information

Consultant (child care, nutrition, elderly, etc.)

Develop nutrition programs

Provide occupational training--among many others even more particularized.

...A third documentary point on the lack of consistent identity for home economics, and thus home economists, is methodological in nature. Business and government employers are relatively inarticulate on the subject. It is pointedly difficult for them to collect their thoughts about home economists as a class of employees or potential employees and generalize their comments. They perceive such wide diversity that they cannot fasten on a clear identity referent to help them express their opinions.

In some senses, but in a lower-keyed way, even educators are affected by the same identity problems. They say, for instance:

> "The home economics programs should be nationally consistent."

> "Some change in the title home economics is probably a good idea, but we have more important changes to make which make us more understandable."

> "We should update all the home economics material or return to the basics. It's confusing now."

...Whatever may have caused this situation in the past is water over the dam, but the situation, as it exists today is clearly explicable:

- Home economics subsumes so many different and (perceived to be) unrelated subdisciplines--food and nutrition, social and community improvement, clothing and fashion, health and child care, to mention only a few--that there is no known and understood focus upon which a clear identity for home economics can rest.

- Some other disciplines have the same problem as, for example psychology and sociology, but these tend to be viewed as theoretical or "thinking" disciplines, while home economics has a fairly consistent practical or task-oriented connotation.[1/] Consequently, identification breaks down for home economics into a fractionated series of unrelated identities which people cannot pull together into a common clear identity whole. People seem to be saying: "I have a vague idea about what

1/ A later finding discusses this point further.

home economists do, but then again I'm not so sure." And in this light, potential employers have the biggest problem, for they are concentrating on a needed job function and, outside of traditional food testing and the like, cannot really tell whether a home economist "fills the bill" or not.

HYPOTHESIS #2

That, because home economics has no clear and consistent identity, it has no prevailing image among the populations studied.

...The rationale for this is specific and applies to any image investigation (corporation, organization, product, publication, government, or whatever else). An image is an evaluative judgment. Meaningful aggregate evaluations are only possible against a commonly understood set of standards--or described another way, an identity with clear parameters which are relatively well-understood by all.

...For home economics specifically,[1/] the result of this situation is a "collage" or anthology of stereotypes, which vary from one extreme to another, not just between the populations studied but within them as well--almost as if each individual had a different opinion emerging from his particular circumstantial encounter with home economics or a home economist. A coherent aggregate image for home economists simply does not exist. For instance:

1/ In other areas such as a newly formed corporation, there can be literally no image because no one has even heard of the company. Not so with home economics, since the appellation has been used a long time and people feel they should know what the term means.

- Some legislators and government agency administrators describe home economists as "bright, better-educated, more liberal, outgoing, etc.," while others say "passive, submissive, middle-class folks, women who want to be housewives, etc."

- Business executives describe home economists as "attractive, well-organized women, sometimes creative, dedicated, etc.," while others say "not related to business, education-minded, not overly creative nor motivated, nice girls who want a nice safe berth, etc."

- Some educators describe home economists as "intelligent, bright, aware, aggressive, etc.," while others in about equal numbers describe home economists as "dull, conservative, not outgoing, domesticated, rural, etc."

HYPOTHESIS #3

That among the wide-ranging stereotypes which people use to characterize home economists, two are somewhat more commonly held than others. The first and most general of these is "task-oriented."

...The first stereotype with some commonality is that home economists are primarily task-oriented "do-ers" and providers of information. Quantitatively, 60 per cent of all respondents agreed, but they also had other ways of saying it. Home economists are:

"Practical girls, not philosophers."

"They deal with skills, not ideas."

"They are activists (in the literal sense), not idealists."

College Administrators

"Concerned with the development of skills."

"Home economists should learn occupational skills."

"Home economics curricula should have less theory, be more practical."

Secondary School Administrators

"Interested in homemaking skills, domestic roles."

"Not career-oriented, interested in cooking and sewing skills."

"Tend to be pretty practical go-getters."

Legislators and Government Agency Administrators

"Technicians, like to do things with their hands."

"Practical, not intellectual."

"Task-oriented, not research-oriented."

Business Executives

The essential significance of this finding is to suggest that home economists are not generally felt to be creative professionals--instead, they are called "middle class professionals," "midlevel, not professional" and "women who want to be housewives." Their frequent dedication to their work is often fully appreciated, but dedication is not equatable with the idea-producing creativity which many associate with professionalism.

HYPOTHESIS #4

That the second general stereotype for home economists is "teacher."

...The first or primary position for which the populations studied believe that home economists should be hired is teacher.

	%
Teacher	84
Dietitian	47
Test kitchen supervisor	38
Cooperative extension agency	30
Consumer representative	29
Utilities sales representative	28
Merchandise manager	19

...And teaching is also the first-mentioned goal for which college or university administrators say their home economics departments are preparing students.

Teaching	9 out of 10
Nutrition/dietetics	8 out of 10
Nursery school/day care	
Interior design	

HYPOTHESIS #5

That the foregoing findings about home economists--no universal clear identity nor image, stereotyped as task-oriented and as teachers primarily--answer the question as to why home economists are not often selected as managers or administrators.

...For better or for worse, both business and government "stipulate" in their individual ways that managers or administrators have a reasonably comprehensive understanding of the discipline demanded by a particular managerial position and that condidates for that position have demonstrated an aptitude to apply creative thinking across all facets of that discipline in a real-world sense (i.e., not philosophically). Home economics, with its task-oriented, "teacher" stereotypes in a fractionated discipline (which, if it has any focus, it is homemaking and family), simply is not seen as meeting this employment stipulation. Consequently, home economists, with noteworthy exceptions of course, tend to be "kept" in nonmanagerial positions where their capacity to perform productive tasks in a dedicated way has been shown to be both worthwhile and profitable.

...Asked why they believe home economists are task-oriented "do-ers" and not managers or administrators, the respondents in this study indicate about equally:

- That college curricula do not properly prepare home economists for managerial positions, and

- That home economics, in some unplanned way, tends differentially to attract those interested in functional types of positions and/or those who lack motivation for advancement.

...Since most prospective employers do not and cannot really know the above two "facts," they are responding to impression or experience. And experience, we believe, may well have resulted in an unusually high number of job-new incumbent mismatches. On the one hand, the potential employer has relatively specific criteria for the position he wishes to fill; on the other hand, home economics, seen as a "grab bag" of skills, gives him no real assurance that the particular talents he needs are to be found in the class of persons called home economists. The chances for error or mismatches are increased. Such a situation is tolerable in functional, nonmanagerial positions, but it can be costly in filling managerial or administrative positions.

...In this connection, consider these contrasting illustrations:

- An employer seeking to fill a position requiring knowledge of physics or chemistry, does not request "a scientist"; he specifically requests a physicist or a chemist, even though both are scientists.

- An employer seeking to fill a position requiring psychological knowledge, does not request a "social scientist"; he specifically requests a psychologist.

- An employer seeking to fill a position requiring ability to speak and read French, does not request a "linguist"; he specifically requests the precise French-speaking talent he needs.

- By contrast, an employer seeking to fill a position requiring detailed knowledge of fabrics (or nutrition or child care, etc.) may or may not think of requesting a home economist and, if he does, from all he can tell, may or may not get someone who can successfully perform the job he has in mind.

HYPOTHESIS #6

That the way business, government and media employers now use home economists attests to the diverse employer expectations which home economics has, in a sense, fostered through the years and seems still to be fostering with its lack of a clear identity.

...Business employers say they now use home economists:

- For test kitchens and product development and testing.
- For consumer relations, affairs, education.
- In public relations, publicity.
- In product marketing research.
- As stylists, fashion shows.
- For competitive product evaluations.
- To prepare manuscripts for cookbooks, recipes.
- To prepare "use and care of product" brochures.
- To teach home sewing.
- To work with R&D, technical people.
- To answer consumer questions.

- To stimulate business in stores.
- To provide feedback on consumer reactions.
- To prepare photographs and product directions.
- To "say what appeals to ladies."

...Government employers say they now use home economists:

- In child or infant care areas.
- In family planning.
- As a part-time member of a commission.
- In a public information role.
- As a consultant on nutrition for the elderly.
- As "trainers" in connection with nutritional programs.
- On a consultation basis--community on aging.
- As a consultant on new legislation.
- To testify as experts before Committees.
- (And one legislator said: "No home economists here--most staff members are professionals".)

...Media employers seem to use home economists on a part-time, "this-kind-of-knowledge-is-needed-now-but-not-always" basis. They are most wont to say that the (perceived) areas of home economics expertise do not fit their needs and to comment in these illustrative and revealing ways:

> "We have no test kitchens, don't need them."
>
> "Don't go out to seek a home economist, but one who also can write, could get a job here."
>
> "Certainly could not use in our modern living department."
>
> "Don't need to employ home economists--can get one when wanted."
>
> "We have women, not home economists, who do things like that."

...Clearly the above employment framework does not encompass all of the truly successful home economists who have contributed much to many employers. Those where a "real match" has been found are much appreciated by their employers and hold responsible positions. But the study concerns the aggregate situation and planning for the future. Educators say that the number of home economics students is increasing, so that more and more

will be seeking employment. A clear identification of their capabilities, and a better understanding of these capabilities among employers, would go far toward encouraging employment and giving home economists a real chance to obtain better employment opportunities.

HYPOTHESIS #7

That there are strong overtones of change in the concepts concerning the substance of the home economics discipline, contributed primarily by the educators, but even here there is no certain unanimity of opinion and constructive clearly oriented directionability to that change.

...This change is typified by the 4 out of 5 who say that home economists are "socially oriented" and the contrastingly smaller number (approximately 50%) who say "home economists are primarily involved in domestic functions, like cooking, sewing and nutrition."

...Most educators seem to see the home economics discipline and curricula in a state of flux, where:

- They seem to be trying to hold the line on the more traditional "basic skills" requirement--in cooking and food preparation, sewing, homemaking, etc., while
- They also seem to admit that updating and increased relevancy to life today are definitely needed.

...Consequently, educators appear caught on the horns of a dilemma, for which they have not yet found a resolution. The following points of view regarding goals for the teaching of home economics, all expressed by secondary school and college educators, illustrate:

Maintaining the Traditional	Striking Out in New Directions
"Teach organizational skills to be an effective homemaker."	"Teach the value of life and life's values."
"Stay with basic services--field in-service courses."	"Less time on nutrition and clothing."
"Less theory--stick to the practical approach."	"Too heavily skill oriented, should prepare students for life."
"Keep the curriculum as it is--to give practical experience."	"Make curriculum more "liberal arts," multidisciplinary, add political action courses, research methods, family law and economics, etc."
"Not psychology and sociology, more on the job practical training."	"Give exploratory experience to learn to cope with society, the quality of life, etc." 1/

...There is certainly no answer in this study as to the resolution of the changes in process in home economics as depicted above: first, because only a full-scale study among educators could provide such a conclusion, but also because it appears doubtful that educators are

1/ Interestingly, these statements tend to end with "etcetera" as though the rest of the conceptual content is not quite understood.

certain of their own directions. There is a lot of admitting that change is needed or is in fact taking place, but very little consistency and/or specificity when it comes to resolution of the direction of change. Each of the two broad points of view--stay with the traditional and strike out in new directions--has its partisans. The decision, however, seems clearly to be left for the future.

HYPOTHESIS #8

That the identity confusion about home economics and home economists, taken together with the perception of some that there is need for a change in the discipline, is fully symbolized in the issue as to whether home economics should or shouldn't change its name.

...At the level of college/university administrators there is little apparent agreement on the point. Some profess to have no idea why a name change is under consideration, some think it is as a result of:

- A desire to change the image of the discipline--"Get free of the stigma of the little old lady in tennis shoes."
- A public relations maneuver--"To sell the program."
- A genuine recognition of the broader interests of home economics programs today.
- An effort to get more men involved.

...Most college/university administrators seem to feel that the name changes attempted, by and large, did not succeed as they were done, principally because it did not

appear to them to bring with it the necessary substantive changes:

"A name change alone will change little."

"We have more important changes to make."

"Could be effective but not alone, substance must also change."

...There is, however, an undercurrent of administrators who seem to feel that the name change may be a start:

"The present name doesn't really represent the program."

"Good idea, because name change will be accompanied by change in substance."

...Also there is opinion that whatever else is true, a name change for home economics should be nationally consistent, but this may not happen because "those in home economics for a long time feel threatened."

III. OTHER PRINCIPAL INSIGHTS INTO ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR SPECIFIC TO HOME ECONOMICS TODAY

The following additional qualitative findings are presented for their possible usefulness to the American Home Economics Association:

1. Over all populations studied, the perceived areas of involvement of home economists (from a prepared list) in rank order of mention are:

   Nutrition
   Consumer problems
   Child development/care
   Family planning
   Quality of life, human values
   Housing
   Problems of the aging
   Alternate life-styles
   Minority problems
   Resource conservation/ecology

2. Most businesses which consistently employ home economists in practical line positions find their contributions to the company profitable.

3. Most legislators and government agency administrators feel a lack of public administration training among home economists. They say:

> "Give them courses to enable them to put their ideas to use in political action."
>
> "Teach them government planning, government standards."
>
> "Get them to understand public programs in the area of their expertise."

4. Legislators and government agency administrators, in need of a home economist for expert testimony, use colleges and universities as a source. The second most frequent mention in this connection was the American Home Economics Association. Minor mentions included other government agencies, state health departments, utilities, American Vocational Association and county extension services.

5. Media potential employers are concerned with having home economists learn communications skills: English, writing, public speaking, broadcast in addition to their other training.

6. All secondary school administrators reported male students in their home economics courses as an elective not as a requirement. Just two schools reported a male home economics teacher, teaching "senior homemaking" and "consumer education."

7. All but one secondary school administrator indicated that Future Homemakers of America existed in their schools or school systems. The values associated with this program were in rank order of mention:

   - Service to the community, community participation.
   - To teach leadership.
   - To provide social functions in school or with other schools.
   - To teach cooperation, involvement, socialization.
   - To add planning and organizational abilities.
   - To provide more organized activities.
   - To improve the student's image.

- To open other avenues of vocation training.

- To help student decide on college courses.

8. The majority of state school officials and school superintendents questioned, indicated they offer some form of home economics at the elementary school level, mainly informally in general programs or as a "mini-course," not part of the general curriculum. Most did not have trained home economists presently teaching this subject.

9. Every college/university administrator indicated that the home economics program had increased in recent years. Such responses as these were given: 300 per cent growth in past twelve years, 26 per cent over the past year, doubled, 25 per cent in the past three years, etc. The reasons for these increases are many:

- Offering wider curriculum.

- Have an improved faculty.

- Perceive better occupational opportunities.

- Better meeting needs of students.

- Better public relations.

- Make a broader experience base available.

10. Most college/university administrators believe that home economics plays an active role in overall school administration and in the determination of policy proportionate to the size of the home economics enrollment. They are of two minds, however, as to whether finding, facilities and faculty salaries have increased in proportion to the increases in home economics enrollment--about half said "yes" and half said "no."